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THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE

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The Voice of the Turtle

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NUMISMATICS

A PUBLICATION OF THE ANCIENT COIN CLUB
OF AMERICA

VOL. IV, No. 8

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From the Editor's Desk



August is supposed to be the month of the summer doldrums. If this is so elsewhere, it is not for either coin collecting or for those who bring the *Voice of the Turtle* to you each month. It is to these two subjects that this editorial must address itself.

First of all there has been a serious proposal made in the U. S. Senate that certain activities in coins be curtailed by legislative enactment. Following this, new organizations have been formed and a highly organized cry of agony has been heard.

Before succumbing to hysteria perhaps one small voice of dissent might speak. As Socrates did in ancient Athens, ought we not ask ourselves a few questions? Does the proposal aim at coin collectors? Or does it seem to threaten those who have had the temerity to hoard money which was minted for the use of all citizens? Do the coins being hoarded at which the proposal aims have any real numismatic significance?

Should we, because we collect ancient coins, come to the aid of greed driven people who have hidden our money from us in hope of profit, and who, when faced with government intervention ask us to frustrate that government? Is not the minting of money and the control of its circulation a sovereign prerogative of the state? Do not we, as citizens of a democratic nation, expect our government to protect our rights, including our rights to have money to spend?

Was it vending machines which drained over forty million silver dollars from the Treasury in less than six months? If coin hoarders have that much financial power, can they absolve themselves of holding millions of dollars more of our subsidiary coinage? Can we be proud to be associated with the people who advertise to sell, to numismatists no less, four hundred 1963 nickels for four times their face value? Are we really concerned with the fate of anyone foolish enough to make such a purchase? Do you feel that the increasing numbers of stories about fraud and deception are unrelated to the speculative frenzy in coins?

And finally, are those new organizations which now ask for support, both moral and financial, truly interested in the needs of the collector? Or are their interests to protect hoped for profits from speculation and hoarding of modern coins? A little soul searching is perhaps in order.

We can't help but point out that when Gallienus was emperor, he minted coins by the ton, his answer to financial

problems was to step up mint production. His coins, one thousand, seven hundred years later are still the most common of all ancients, still sell for under a dollar and make one want to ask how long he has to hold his multi-million mintage coins to realize a legitimate profit.

Secondly, it is necessary to introduce the publishers of the *Voice of the Turtle*. The owners of Argonaut Inc. are classical scholars and members of the Ancient Coin Club of America. When, in November of 1964 the Turtle was revived with a typewriter, a prayer and an appeal for help, their offer was to publish the *Turtle*.

In essence, these people agreed with a number of basic premises regarding the ACCA. They felt that a collectors' organization was important, vital and valid. They felt moreover that ancient coin collecting was an honorable and an important vocation or avocation which deserved the notice of and dissemination to the public. They felt, furthermore, that no single numismatic publication in this country was properly performing its alleged function and that the time was long over ripe for a magazine which would serve the needs of all collectors of ancient coins. They felt that these beliefs would inevitably be justified, that the response of collectors would make the ACCA and the *Turtle* self sustaining. They were willing to back up that faith with cash as well as time.

The result of that faith and willingness to serve is now in your hands, but this is not all. Because of their help, the President is now free to formulate and administer new activities for the ACCA, your editor is free to edit and see to the quality of material which is published each month. Your officers are able to tend to their duties with confidence and without distraction.

And the ACCA is growing, is receiving attention, not only in this country, but throughout the world. The faith of a few and the willingness of the few to serve are now bringing a revival of ancient numismatics to the many.

POTENTIAL USEFULNESS of the ACCA HAS NO LIMITS

It can be what its members want it to be. But they must participate. You will get out of it about what you put into it. Any such group must be a co-operative organization. Keep the ball rolling.

Fr. — V. F.

THE NUMISMATIC MUSEUM OF ATHENS

by JOHN EMERSON McCARTHY

The Numismatic Museum of Athens was established in 1833. Scholars consider it to be one of the most important numismatic collections in the world, as indeed it is. Today the museum houses a collection of over 400,000 coins plus a large number of medals, gems, lead seals, weights, tokens of lead and terra cotta, seals, coin casts and other related objects.

Since the end of the second World War, the Numismatic Museum has been housed on the second floor of the new building of the National Archaeological Museum at the corner of Bouboulinas and Tositsa Streets. Thanks to the hard work of its staff the collections have been accessible to scholars since 1950. Before that time the material was packed in crates and deposited in the safes of the treasury of the National Bank of Greece. Due to a lack of funds and a small staff, the first exhibits were not opened to the public, however, until 1956.

Since the museum was first established, all coins found in excavations in Greece have been deposited in it and generous gifts by collectors, institutions and other benefactors have augmented the collection to the point where it is one of the most excellent in the world, containing an accumulation of innumerable unusual and rare specimens of Greek coin types.

Since the end of WW II the museum has received several gifts and bequests, the most important of which was the collection of Gregory Empedokles in 1956 which contained 7,400 coins (3,486 silver, 3,865 bronze and 49 gold). The library, lacking funds, could not purchase some of the most necessary research materials but again, individuals came to the rescue. The most important gift to the library was a complete series of the *Sylloge Numorum Graecorum* donated by John Passas.

Several of the directors of the NMA have acquired international fame for their numismatic works. One of these was John Svoronos, the author of *Coinage of the Ptolemies*, the editor of the *Journal Internationale d'Archaeologie Numismatique* and a collaborator with Barclay Head for *Historia Numorum*. Others have been C. Constantopoulos, the world renowned authority on Byzantine coins and seals and E. Varoucha-Christodouloupolou, one of the best known numismatists of our time, who recently retired.

In the effort to encourage the expansion of numismatic knowledge in areas outside of Athens, the Archaeological Council of Greece voted, after WW II, to permit new archaeological finds and gifts from individuals to be retained by local museums to establish local numismatic collections and educational exhibits. Numismatic collections have also been established in many high schools in recent years to educate the

younger generation to the artistic and historical value of ancient coins. This last measure has been very valuable and has helped to enrich the collections in Greece because ancient coins turn up fairly frequently in plowing and planting the fields and students now take pride in adding their finds to their school collections. Otherwise they would have kept them or sold them, possibly losing valuable specimens forever.

The Numismatic Museum of Athens remains the outstanding numismatic museum in Greece, despite the growth of new local collections. Its staff identifies and dates the numismatic finds from excavations and then returns them to the local museums where they belong. Still it is plagued by a lack of funds which has prevented the acquisition of new exhibition cases and the necessary library materials. For this reason the *Voice of the Turtle* is mailed regularly to the museum, since it must depend on the good will of publishers to obtain the current numismatic journals. We hope that other publishers of coin publications are also sending copies of their works regularly, for this is one of the most active places of numismatic research in the world, and must not be hindered for lack of the proper research materials.

Reports of the new acquisitions of the NMA are published annually in the *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique*, the journal of the French School of Archaeology in Athens. For those who might wish to assist the museum through donations of research or library materials, contributions should be addressed to Mrs. Manto Karamesine, director, Numismatic Museum of Athens, Tositsa Street, Athens, Greece.

Enlarged photographs of some of the finest specimens of types of Greek coins in the museum are to be included in a giant book on Greek coinage in preparation by Christian Zervos, a well known Greek art historian living in Paris.

Any numismatist visiting Athens should be sure to set aside ample time for a visit to the museum, for there are many coins there which can be seen nowhere else in the world. Particularly if you make arrangements for your visit in advance, the staff will do whatever it can to assist in research or to show you special coins which may be of particular interest to you.

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A COIN PORTRAIT OF MITHRADATES VI DIONYSUS

By HAROLD ROPEL

The surname Dionysus for the famous king of Pontus, Mithradates VI Eupator, is well attested, both by ancient authors (Appian, *Mithradatic War* 10; Plutarch, *Questions Convivales*, I,6,2; Dion Chrysostomus 11, 294; Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, XXV) and by contemporary inscriptions (Dittenberger, *OGIS* 370).

The coinage portraits however have not revealed a verification of this surname to date. The deification of Mithradates as Dionysus dates after the year 88 B.C. (cf. T. Homolle, in *BCH* 8,1884, p. 103), and there is a good possibility that representations of the king as Dionysus must have been used for coin portraits. This assumption is logical since the most recently identified sculpture portrait of Mithradates VI Eupator represents him as Dionysus (cf. Al.N.Oikonomides, in *Voice of the Turtle* 4, 1965, p.14, fig. 4).



FIG. 1: Portrait of Mithradates VI as Dionysus on bronze coin issued by Amisos.



FIG. 2: Portrait of Mithradates on the famous medal of the Washington collection.

The coin illustrated in figure 1 shows the head of young Dionysus who, by a simple comparison with the known coin portraits of Mithradates VI, appears to have the features of the king. It was minted at Amisus which was the naval and commercial capital of Pontus during Mithradates' reign. We may add also that the die-cutter engraver of the Mithradates-Dionysus portrait appears to be the same one who created the Athena-Perseus and the Ares types in this period. If a different master was involved, the similarity of style and execution is at least indicative of the existence of an important school of art in Amisus which flourished in the first half of the first century B.C.

The importance of Amisus during the years of the reign of Mithradates justifies the existence of such a school of art. Since Mithradates VI made Amisus his residence, alternately with Sinope, it is recorded that he added an entire new portion

to the city which was called Eupatoria (Appian, *Mithradatic War*, 78) and a new palace was erected there to accommodate the king and his court.

We also know that Mithradates VI built a number of temples in Amisus and, following the example of the Ptolemies and Seleucids, formed a circle of scholars, poets and authors for his court (cf. T. Reinach, *Mithradates Eupator*, Paris 1890, p.247). So it is more than supported to suppose the existence of a flourishing school of artists in Amisus at this time when a new palace, temples and, in fact, a new city were being built.

The comparison of the portrait of Mithradates VI as Dionysus on the Amisus coin, with the other coin portraits of the king, makes it very likely that the proposed identification is correct. As an example, it may be paralleled with the portrait of Mithradates on the Waddington medal (fig. 2, cf. also Al. N. Oikonomides in *Archaeology* 15, 1962, pp.13-16) and we hope that research by other scholars will add to our present knowledge on the subject.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ancient coins fascinate. They are covered with the patina of centuries. To hold and own a coin that was perhaps once spent by Aristotle or Caesar fills one with awe. But to be appreciated and enjoyed coins must be studied.

Study is communication. Learning comes both from books and from teachers. If the ACCA is to have any real meaning to those who collect and study ancient coins it must be the channel through which communication proceeds.

The *Turtle* is only a part, though a large one, in this process. The other is the actual face to face meeting of people with similar interests. There is only one way which a national organization composed of collectors of ancient coins can bring its people together and that is through local chapters.

The paramount aim of your officers for the remainder of this year will be to stimulate and foster the formation and growth of local groups. Already formed in such diverse areas as New York, Nebraska, California and elsewhere, these chapters are the living strength of the national organization.

If there is a local group in your area, participate; if not, form one. The entire facilities of the national organization lie at your disposal. The greatest pleasure obtainable from collecting ancient coins is working with friends who also collect.

George E. Broughton, Pres.

GREEK NUMISMATIC EPIGRAPHY

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE COINAGE OF THE CITY-STATES AND THE HELLENISTIC KINGDOMS

By JOHN E. HARTMANN

The numismatists beginning the study of inscriptions on Greek coins must realize that, although numismatic handbooks do not give clear chronological divisions of Greek numismatic epigraphy into periods, such divisions do exist and are very important to the systematic study of the subject.

It has already been mentioned above that the final triumph of the Ionic alphabet (which is the Greek alphabet now in use) over the other early Greek alphabets cannot be considered to be complete before the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. Thus the numismatist knows that any coin inscription with letter forms earlier than the common Ionic belongs to the period from the sixth to the fourth centuries B.C. The beginner must be warned here that some peculiarly shaped Greek letters on certain issues of the Imperial period from Asia Minor and the Middle East are not those in question. To be sure, the letters of the coin to be dated must be compared with the early Greek alphabets in the chart published in the first part of his study.

The inscriptions on Greek coins can be divided chronologically into four periods: Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Imperial. The latter will be discussed in detail later.

I. *Archaic*. (6th C. B.C. — 403/2 B.C.) These are the inscriptions using the early Greek alphabets. The form of the letters is delicate and sometimes the inscription reads from left to right rather than from right to left. The *sigma* (S) is formed by three lines or sometimes like an M. The *theta* appears with a + or an X within the circle; the M and N with the right half shorter than the left or formed by diagonal lines (/) rather than vertical bars. The H reads like our H and letters such as *phi* (O divided in the center by a vertical bar) and *psi* (V divided by a vertical bar) are obviously different from their later forms in the Ionic alphabet. The letters F and Q appear only in the inscriptions of this period. (A few exceptions to this rule can be attributed to an effort toward traditional archaism in the coinage of some city-states during later periods). The letter *omega* does not appear anywhere (except in a few archaic coin inscriptions from the Ionian city-states).

II. *Classical*. (403/2 B.C.-336 B.C.) The features of classical numismatic epigraphy are not necessarily those of other types of inscriptions of the classical period. In the classical period we must consider all coin inscriptions using the fully developed Ionic alphabet or its letter forms in a traditional archaic coin inscription. A few hints can help in dating classi-

cal inscriptions with more precision. The *A* appears with a horizontal bar and not a diagonal one as in the *alpha* of archaic inscriptions. The *O* and the *omega* are nearly always smaller than the other letters, and sometimes the *theta* is as well. The horizontal bars of the sigma are not parallel, but oblique. The *Y* is exactly as ours today and does not appear as a *V* as in archaic inscriptions. The *theta* has a dot in the center of an *O* rather than the + or X as in the archaic style. In some cases there is a horizontal line through the *O*, although this becomes much more common later.

The most difficult task is dividing the classical from the really Hellenistic inscriptions. Only one clue helps in doing this and that is that the inscriptions on coins of the classical period consist of letters composed of straight lines with no serifs or other decoration. Whether deeply or delicately carved, they remain simple straight line letters. In cases of a traditional coin inscription originating in the archaic period being recarved on a coin minted in the classical period, the form of the letters (even the letters *F* and *Q* which were extinct by this time) follows the pattern of the new style.

III. Hellenistic (336-31 B.C.) In numismatic epigraphy the earliest Hellenistic inscriptions are those on the coinage of Alexander the Great. There are obvious differences among the early, middle and late Hellenistic coin inscriptions. Those which we call early are almost indistinguishable from the classical in letter forms, but they can be recognized by a new element introduced by the die cutters. The letters, while still formed by straight lines, end in knob-like serifs. This element is almost unknown in classical and archaic inscriptions, but by the late Hellenistic period it had been grossly overused. There are also some new letter forms which developed during this period. For instance, the *sigma* bars became parallel rather than oblique, the *O* and *omega* became the same height as the other letters and certain master touches on letters of classical numismatic epigraphy became extinct such as the shortening of the right vertical bars of the *H*, *pi*, *A* and *lambda*. One of the most obvious characteristics of middle and late Hellenistic inscriptions is the changing *omega*. The former semi-circular or bowed shape with straight extensions to the right and left became more and more compressed. The bow became taller, the extensions shorter at the sides, and the opening at the bottom became narrower until the shape resembled somewhat the profile of a light bulb. The upper half of the *Y* appeared curved sometimes, rather than straight and V-shaped, and the cross bar of the *A* was sometimes seen as a small arc. Especially in the late Hellenistic period, the *theta* was carved with a horizontal bar instead of a dot.

Since Hellenistic history is artificially made to end with the sea battle at Actium (31 B.C.), we must accept this date as the ending of the period of Hellenistic coin inscriptions, however artificially. But as the numismatist will discover in studying his coins, this is not true epigraphically speaking. The new style and forms of letters of the Ionic alphabet do not appear definitely different until the middle of the Imperial period, but about these inscriptions and letter forms we will give more details later.

THE PURPOSE AND FORMULA OF COIN INSCRIPTIONS

Now we must devote ourselves to something very important — the rationalization of the standard formulas used by the Greeks in inscribing their coins.

How did the coin obtain an inscription? Numismatists know that the earliest known coins of the ancient world were not inscribed, but simply identified as a symbolic type, usually of more or less heraldic origin. The addition of the inscription served to make the correct identification of the symbol more definite and to prohibit misrepresentation, while, at the same time, guaranteeing the established value in exchange.

Accordingly, the inscription must identify the issuing city-state. But since the symbolic type remains of greater importance in order to be recognized in trade by literate and illiterate alike, the inscription was squeezed into an empty space and sometimes even shortened in order to fit. The names of coins mentioned by the ancient authors (*owls*, *mustangs*, *turtles*, etc.) indicate that the value denominations of the issuing authority were recognized primarily from the symbolic type rather than from the inscriptions.

This is the main reason for the short inscriptions on the earliest Greek coins. Nearly all of these are shortened names of city-states, sometimes reduced to one, two and no more than five letters. The majority of such inscriptions belong to the archaic and classical periods of numismatic epigraphy. Hellenistic coin inscriptions aim toward complete words and the late Hellenistic lean toward formal, even pompous, completeness. As for the inscriptions on coins of the Imperial period, their lengthy formulas, pompous descriptive precision and scholastic formulas have no parallel in earlier periods.

A selection is given here, in alphabetical order, of the most common inscriptions of this class. The portion of the ethnic given in parentheses does not appear on the coin and it must be remembered that all the ethnics are given in the genitive plural. In the case of archaic inscriptions the final O is shown as an *omicron* (O) rather than as an omega as in classical and later inscriptions. Whenever this occurs, any E preceding it might be read as an *eta* (H) instead of *epsilon* and any

O might be read as an *omega*. Bear in mind that the number of letters in a given ethnic may vary among different dies or types of the same city. Also, keep in mind the fact that during the late Hellenistic period and the period of the Roman Emperors, the city ethnics are rarely shortened. The same list can be used for reading complete inscriptions by ignoring the parentheses.

(*To Be Continued*)

(For the first part of *Greek N. E.* see issue No. 7, pp 133-137)

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COIN TOPICS

Edited by C. C. Woods

A reader asks why some hints aren't given for displaying ancient coins. It is commendable that there is a desire to show coins and the educational purposes of the *Turtle* are in accord with any attempts to bring about more displays of ancient coins to offset in part the dull and lackluster exhibits of Lincoln cents and worthless medals.

We can not agree with this same reader that any one should be afraid to display. There can be no "poor" exhibit of ancient coins, since each coin, because of its age if nothing else, has a fascination for the lay public. On the other hand, there are a few hints that can lead to much better exhibits and hopefully, the real simplicity of preparing a display will convince other of our readers that it is their duty to evangelize a bit and show their collections.

The main secret for a good display is THEME. The exhibit should illustrate a story and there are literally thousands of stories which ancient coins can tell. The following hints are illustrative:

1. Representations of a particular deity on Greek coins through several centuries.
2. Ancient dress as shown on coins.
3. Changing women's hair styles as illustrated by the coins (This feature fascinates the ladies and is especially good for the Roman coins which can be compiled over a three century span.)
4. Ancient ships as illustrated by the coins.
5. The eagle (or any bird or animal for that matter) on coins.
6. Buildings on coins.

Once the reader lets his imagination begin to work the list of possibilities is endless.

A good display should not contain a large number of coins. Individual preferences vary, but a consensus lies between ten and twenty coins per standard ANA display case. Too many coins give the exhibit a cluttered look and tend to confuse the viewer. It is far better to have too few than too many coins.

In a well judged contest, numismatic information should provide 50% of the total valuation of the exhibit. The reader can refer to past issues of the *Voice of the Turtle* in this column for examples of how a story can be told about a coin.

An exhibit should not be cluttered with extraneous material. Maps, illustrations and descriptive text should be limited to material which adds to or points out a particular feature being emphasized.

By all means, look at other displays. Pay particular attention to the prize winners. One successful exhibitor says that he learned the tricks of the trade by going to a show before the judging. He then got the standards by which the judges would award and he judged each display making notes and assessing points. He then later evaluated his judgment against the opinions of the actual judges. He says that he soon learned both what to do, and more important, what not to do in making a successful display.

To recapitulate: Be sure to enter; never be afraid of being beaten. It is through experience that the best exhibits are made. Have a theme. Make your coins illustrate and describe the theme you have selected. Use the old Greek standards of symmetry and moderation. Make your display neat and attractive.

As a collector of ancient coins, possessed of knowledge not available to the lay public, there is an obligation to disseminate that knowledge to the people. There is no one feature of a coin show or convention which draws more public attention than ancient coin displays. The public interest is always high; if we fail to stimulate that interest we are avoiding one of our foremost duties.

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NUMISMATIC PRIMER

The terminology employed in describing coins has developed and changed over the past century, often leaving one perplexed and a trifle confused as to just what is meant by a particular description.

In the interests of achieving both a standard and a common language the *Turtle* takes the position that all metrological information should be in the international metric system. There are compelling reasons for such a decision.

The metric system is the established language of science and since numismatics most properly is a science it is desirable to use scientific terminology throughout. The metric system is also used by most civilized countries, only England and the United States refraining, with England now actively considering a change. Thus a system of weights and measures is available to both student and lay person alike. Finally, no new system is being interjected. Many catalogs and writers describe coin weights and measures in metric terms.

Numismatic standards should then be:

Diameters (Modules) in millimeters

Weights in grams.

Metals described as AV (Gold), AR (Silver) AE (Copper alloys)

The tables which follow in this series attempt to define other systems encountered in numismatic terminology along with conversion factors to the international metric system.

The appellations, "First Brass" "Second Brass" etc. were current at the time Cohen wrote his now famous compilation of Roman Coins. These terms were used to describe the *Sestertius* and *Dupondius* respectively. These terms have largely fallen into disuse because they are neither descriptive nor accurate. Newer collectors often stumble across them through their use of Cohen as a guide in attributing coins.

Sestertii and *dupondii* of the Empire are not composed of brass, but an alloy of copper and zinc properly known as orichalcum. Caley in his recent monograph (VVM 151) shows that this alloy is usually about 15% zinc and 85% copper with several percentage points of variation to each side of this mean figure. Since both coins were evidently struck on the basis of so many to the unit weight of bullion, there is a great variation in individual coin weights. Thus to be accurately described, a Roman orichalcum coin should have both its weight and its diameter given.

* * * *

The idea that the Roman government used pure copper in its coinage is one which is still repeated by people who should know better. It may be true that the government strove to achieve high copper content in the Imperial Asses and sub-

denominations of the As, but analysis shows these coins to be bronze. In all probability, the government attempted to create an alloy which would be durable and also possess the reddish coloration of nearly pure copper.

* * * *

The grain as a unit of weight properly belongs to the "Troy" system. Jewelers and metalsmiths have used Troy weights for centuries in describing both jewels and precious metals. The grain is the basic weight unit of this system, which has an ounce of 480 grains and a pound of 12 ounces or 5,760 grains.

Because the grain is small, the common pound in use in the United States (Avoindupois) is divisible into 7000 grains or 16 ounces of 437½ grains each.

There are 15.4324 grains in a gram. Thus to convert a weight unit given in grains to grams, grains should be multiplied by .0648. For example, a Greek tetradrachm with a given weight of 271 grains would have its weight converted to grams as follows:

$$271 \times .0648 = 17.56 \text{ grams}$$

* * * *

The value of metric weights to collectors is immediate. Army surplus balance scales are sold by mail order houses throughout the country at around \$10.00. These were originally for pharmaceutical use and are accurate to ten milligrams (.01 gram). A set of gram and milligram weights can be obtained for under \$5.00 (Weights for ounces, either troy or ADP are expensive and not easily obtainable from scientific houses). Thus for fifteen dollars, a collector is in a position to weigh and record the weights of all his coins. Weight comparisons can be most helpful in attribution, particularly if using a catalog which publishes coin weights.

(To be continued)

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The Agora and the Forum

In Athens men met in the Agora and in Rome, affairs of business and state were debated in the Forum. So "Voice of the Turtle" asks that members write us their views. These will be published for open consideration and discussion.

I just spent 60¢ at a newsstand for *Coinage*, which advertised an article on its cover about Women on coins. It turned out that this article was an alphabetical listing by country based on Yeoman's catalogue. The most amazing thing was that under "Greece" it said see "Ancient Greece" and under Italy, it said, see "Ancient Roman Coins." But under the "A's" there was no ancient Greece, nor ancient Rome. They were omitted! A careful search through the entire magazine failed to reveal a single word about women on ancient coins. And that seems to me to be typical of the careless editorial work which abounds in coin publications today which have been put together hurriedly to cash in on the fad of coin collecting. *Beatrice Graham, Chicago.*

* * *

In order to interest people in ancient coins, we should be able to give a lecture if called upon to do so. While I know my own coins, I would like to be able to speak on ancient coins generally and have been invited to do so to a high school group and also to a group of Girl Scouts. Could the "Turtle" publish an outline of the important points to be covered in a short talk which would interest novices? Also, is there somewhere where I could get slides or photographs to illustrate my talk? *Robin Jones, Charleston, West Virginia.*

Editor's Note: In a forthcoming issue, we will give suggested topics and outlines, as well as sources for illustrative material.

* * *

As a very new collector, who hasn't even been to many shows, I wonder if there aren't other interesting ways to exhibit coins than simply in a case. For instance, if women's hairstyles are a subject for an exhibit, couldn't you have a model head, exhibited with the coins, with a wig arranged in a typical hairstyle? It seems to me that this would be even more interesting than just a case of coins. Or if you collect ships on coins, couldn't you have an exhibit of drawings or model ships with them? In short, an exhibit of coins together with three dimensional objects or models of the subject of the coins, would make an exhibit truly new, different, and more educational. Is there a regulation against this sort of thing? Do shows insist that the exhibits fit inside a regulation case and consist only of coins and an occasional map or picture? I would appreciate a professional's comment on this. *Robert Cresap, Hinsdale, Illinois.*

* * *

I am continually amazed to hear people say that they can't afford to collect ancients, because they're too expensive. Maybe we, as collectors of ancient coins, would do our hobby a good turn, by pointing out whenever possible, that coins (maybe not the best ones, but at least enough to get a collection started) can be purchased for as little as 50¢. I believe that the stories of ancient coins selling for hundreds of dollars are actually deterring potential collectors from entering the field. If we can attract them with some of the more reasonably priced coins, they'll get the "bug" and then be ready to go on to the higher-priced items. *Grace Toft, South River, New Jersey.*

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Elsewhere in the Numismatic World

Gilliard, Frank D., NOTES ON THE COINAGE OF JULIAN THE APOSTATE, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 54, 1964, p. 135 ff. + 1 plate.

The Emperor Julian has been considered one of the more fascinating figures of the fourth century, that time of change and ferment in the ancient world. It was he who turned from Christianity back to paganism and it was he also who attempted to restore the old Gods in the empire, thus earning for himself the approbation of future Christians and the name of the "Apostate." Two recent novels have been devoted to this remarkable figure.

In his prefatory remarks, Professor Gilliard states that it is because Julian is such a fascinating figure that what is not known about him is all the more tantalizing.

His article is in the form of a preliminary study, showing possible avenues of research into various aspects of the reign of Julian which might yield to solution through a study of his coins. In particular, the chronological problem created by the beard is discussed. The coin types of the VOTA, Eagle and Bull as used by Julian are then displayed as problems which research might bring to light. Professor Gilliard concludes with the hypothesis that the Bull reverse, much favored and somewhat unique to Julian is really the astrological representation of the emperor himself.

Crawford, M. H., WAR AND FINANCE, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 54, 1964, p. 29 ff.

The author selects the dating of 213-211 BC as the time of the adoption of the denarius system in gold and silver at Rome. He then attempts to draw further conclusions regarding the earlier system based on Aes Grave and Didrachms. He also attempts to draw conclusions as to Roman financial and monetary policy during this period.

The long awaited *Numismatic Chronical* for 1963 has finally been released. As of this press date, it has not been received. Articles appearing in the *Chronical* which bear on ancient coins will be reviewed in the *Turtle* at the earliest practical date.

It has been reported that a Roman coin hoard has been found at Bangalore in India. No information was available except that the coins were silver and minted during the reign of Augustus. Once again the evidence of a thriving luxury trade between Rome and the Orient is confirmed by the coin discoveries.

A number of price lists, catalogs and magazines are available. Readers are referred to our advertisements for details.

For anyone who has more than a passing interest in the foibles of human nature that give rise to such foolish things as what often passes for coin collecting two articles should be read. Mr. James Risk, our distinguished colleague and editor of the *Numismatic Review* has written on the subject of "Tulips and Coins" in the latest issue (No. 2) of his publication.

Mr. J. P. D'Ivo of London in COIN AND MEDAL BULLETIN for June 1965 has written on the subject of how coin collectors finance rifles for Flicania.

While each of these gentlemen has their respective tongue well in cheek there is perhaps a moral involved.



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BOOK REVIEWS

Wolf Wirgin and Siegfried Mandel, *THE HISTORY OF COINS AND SYMBOLS IN ANCIENT ISRAEL* (Exposition Press, New York, 1958.) This work compares analogously with Immanuel Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* as one which purports to rechart entirely territories which have been subjected to rigorous study, without itself aspiring to the rigorous methodology which informed the studies it is attempting to invalidate. In itself, the *History* is a strange and rather suspicious work: after 150 pages of dismissal of such numismatic authorities as Hill and Reifenberg (without ever so much as a quoted excerpt from one of their "mistaken" opinions) there follow some 70 pages of fascinating and rather less controversial material about fertility symbols in ancient Near Eastern civilizations. This material bears little direct relation to the polemical argumentation which has preceded it, and seems to be included for no reason other than as a kind of neutral "filler", which both reduces the radical tinge of Wirgin's pronouncements and adds a sense of propriety to the work by providing it with a section which seems reasonable and which does not offend as the earlier chapters about dating do. Thus, by association with Mandel's non-hyper-thyroid discussion of symbols, Wirgin's numismatic contentions assume an unwarranted air of clarity and soundness.

As for Wirgin's case itself—and this amounts to little less than a sweeping revaluation of the chronology and interpretation of ancient Jewish coinage virtually in its entirety—it has been treated in depth, and dismissed point by point, in a collection of rebutting essays assembled by the late L. Kadman under the unmistakably pointed title of *The Dating and Meaning of Ancient Jewish Coins and Symbols*. While it is impossible to review here the full range of Wirgin's contentions, a sample argument may provide some insight into the style of his argument.

Wirgin offers the suggestion that the "freedom coins" of years two, three, and four were in fact issued by King Agrippa I in 40-44 A.D. In order to make the dates of the coinage fit those of Agrippa's reign, Wirgin disregards the following facts: two extant coins, "Freedom of Zion" overstruck on a flan issued by Agrippa—*is it conceivable*, asks Kadman, "that the Jews would have overstruck, in honour of Agrippa I, a coin issued by himself, in the same year? Or that the King himself would have done this?" The majority of Wirgin's other contentions—that the Bar Kochba coinage in fact preceded 135 A.D. by a period of 170 years' duration, that the five years referred to in the shekel coinage are in fact five

"shmitta" cycles, lasting a total of 35 years and fitting "snugly" into the Maccabean period—are subject to similarly obvious criticisms, as Messrs. Kadman, Kindler, Meyshan and Klimowsky are not tardy in demonstrating.

Wirgin's *History* is, finally, an eccentricity. That Wirgin offered his case, such as it was, in direct and unabashed opposition to the entire community of numismatic expertise, says more about the author than his argument, which has been so thoroughly rejected.—Gabriel Heilig



Fred Reinfield and Burton Hobson, PICTURE BOOK OF ANCIENT COINS, Sterling Publishing Co., New York, 1964, \$1.00.

Purportedly, this book is written for junior and senior high school students. If it fulfilled this purpose adequately it would be a splendid contribution to American education. Unfortunately, it stands as one more illiterate attempt to cash in on a gullible public's appetite for material on coins. It is small wonder, if this book is representative of the sterile pap and carelessly handled information that our children receive in school, that the Government finds itself forced to form commissions on science and the humanities to investigate why our children emerge from school almost as ignorant as when they began.

The careless, irresponsible handling of history can best be illustrated by a quotation on the Byzantine empire which is dismissed thus. "After the fall of the Western Empire in 476, the Eastern Empire continued to exist for almost another thousand years. We call it the Byzantine Empire, because its capital was Byzantium."

"Almost from the start, the Byzantine Empire was more Oriental than Western, more Greek than Roman. Throughout its long history it was an absolute despotism, with corrupt and intriguing courtiers and a large and cumbersome bureaucracy. The people were passionately interested in chariot races, which served as an outlet for political feeling. Each charioteer belonged to a faction similar to one of our political parties."

Almost as an afterthought the Hagia Sophia (mistakenly as usual referred to as St. Sophia) and the Corpus Juris Civilis are conceded to have been produced, their importance not stressed at all.

The historical information presented on the Greeks and Romans is no better. The book would have remained much better unpublished.—John Hartmann

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Flaceliere, Robert. A LITERARY HISTORY OF GREECE, Aldine Publishing Co., Chicago, 1964. \$8.75

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